

**M**R. T. S. ELIOT is now on his annual visit to the United States, where each year he delivers one lecture on a literary subject—and only one.

But America has found the answer to Mr. Eliot's verbal parsimony and when, a few days ago, he arrived at the University of Minnesota he found himself confronted, in the world's second largest basketball stadium, by an audience of 13,720.

Unabashed by what is surely the mightiest gathering ever addressed by a man of literature, Mr. Eliot opened his talk on Higher Literary Criticism with the mild comment into the microphone "Never before in my life have I seen so many people at one time—and all facing in my direction."

On being told after the lecture that, in fact, 16,000 people had bought tickets, he inquired politely "And what, may I ask, detained the other 2,287?"

#### Pillar of Liberalism

I HEAR that Lord Teviot intends to retire as Chairman of the National Liberal Organisation, thus breaking a

long Liberal tradition at Westminster linked with Conservative-Liberal co-operation over the past twenty-five years.

Lord Teviot, at 62, is a walking advertisement for his rigorous theories about flour milling and baking. He stone-grinds his own wheat and bakes his daily bread. To help persuade the House of Lords to adopt his recipes in the interests of national nutrition their lordships have, on occasion, been fortified by samples of the Teviot loaf.

Lord Teviot has rarely been the centre of the political stage, but he most dramatically came out from behind the scenes into the glare of the spotlight when, some twenty years ago, as Colonel Charles Kerr, M.P. for Montrose Burghs, he moved the Address to the King's Speech attired in the splendid uniform of the Royal Company of Archers.

#### Best Foot Backward

THE Warden of St. Anthony's, Mr. "Bill" Deakin, was a wartime saboteur and secret agent whose exploits in Yugoslavia formed one of the most

# PEOPLE and THINGS: By ATTICUS

thrilling sidelights of the war. So it was natural that he should take a professional interest in the security techniques of the Russian agents who so conspicuously paraded Mr. Khrushchev and Marshal Bulganin to Oxford and elsewhere.

At the first Oxford reception Bill Deakin was aiding his way as close as possible to the distinguished visitors when a heavy heel ground into his toe. Teviot (he holds the Russian Order of Valour as well as the D.S.O.) he retreated and approached again from another angle. Again, as he endeavoured to obtain a closer view of Mr. Khrushchev, a large figure in front of him, with blind but unerring aim, stepped backwards and stamped his foot into the lawn.

Later one of the Scotland Yard detectives confirmed that this was one of the politer tricks of the Russian agents for deterring the inquisitive.

Deakin subsequently amused himself by frustrating the manoeuvres of a third agent, who the Scotland Yard man told him was the finest revolver shot in the Soviet Union, to maintain a clear field of fire around the distinguished gathering.

#### The Flung Gauntlet

JAMES ROBERTSON JUSTICE, that red-bearded giant of the films, is also a falconer, and he has just flung down his falconer's gauntlet in the "New York Times."

A reviewer had incautiously written that a trained hawk "docilely returns to lay the quarry—crane, grouse or pheasant—at its master's feet."

Robertson Justice says that this is rot and that you have to run or ride as fast as you can to take up your falcon from the kill. Writing from North Keswick, N.B., he has bet the reviewer a first-class return fare across the Atlantic, bed, board and as much whisky as he can drink during his stay, that he is unable to produce one falcon that will kill one of our grouse and return it to the handler's feet.

The reviewer is rather vague about accepting this "delightful experience," and he refuses to budge, either from his position in print, or from his home at Woodstock, N.Y.

#### Painted Ships

NO rowing-man myself, I yet view with distress the imminent disappearance of the Oxford college barges. That they are outmoded and inconvenient I can well believe; but I should miss, as will many thousands of others, the personable hulks that bring to a rather gloomy stretch of the Isis the rare element of Fancy.

So acute, indeed, is feeling on this point, that the President of the O.U.B.C., disregarding the traditional enmities of aesthete and oarsman, has sponsored Mr. Kenneth Rowntree's "Paintings of the College Barges" which are to be shown

at the Ashmolean Museum from tomorrow afternoon.

The Vice-Chancellor is to open the exhibition, which is the result of close and affectionate study and constitutes a complete historical record of the barges.

#### The Big Time

BEFORE the marathon face-lifting of Big Ben is complete the clock mechanism will

go for cleaning to Messrs. Dent of Pall Mall, the firm which made it a hundred years ago.

Dents still make giant clocks but one of their other prides is to meet even the most eccentric orders for pocket watches.

Not long ago they built a two-faced gold watch about three inches in diameter for an American customer (what was his line, I wonder?) who demanded to know high and low

tide in New York Harbour, sunrise and sunset, the rising and setting of the moon and of the morning and evening stars, the phases of the moon and the equation of time. The watch also had to be a perpetual calendar and to strike the hours and the quarters.

I am not surprised that the watch cost £1,100, but I am astonished to learn that on the occasion of a recent overhaul

it was found to be performing all its functions.

#### Animator Extraordinary

NEXT Wednesday's first night of "Gigi" at the New Theatre will be a landmark in the life of its producer, Mr. Peter Hall.

In the last eighteen months Mr. Hall has made the Arts Theatre indispensable to the enlightened playgoer and given London, in "The Walls of the Foredoors," one of the most successful productions of recent years. "Gigi" is, I believe, his second foray into the West End proper.

To meet, Mr. Hall is a likeable podge with a taste for very thick woollen outer-garments. His gentle manner does not preclude a considerable firmness in argument and a capacity for making up his own mind in difficult situations. (This served him well, for instance, in the production of "Waiting for Godot" when a letter to the author elicited merely a postcard which read: "Do just as you like, and don't let the actors ask too many questions.")

I was glad to hear that he hopes to reintroduce to London Eugene Ionesco—the most rewarding, to my mind, of practising dramatists.

#### A New Private Press

I MAKE no excuse for crying the wares of the Lion and Unicorn Press, which is the child of the fertile brain of Professor Robin Darwin, Principal of the Royal College of Art.

The object of this Press is to teach Graphic Design students to create beautiful books which will stand comparison with the finest press-work available on the open market.

In its first year, the Lion and Unicorn produced the "Handwriting Manual" of Wolfgang Függer, first published in Nuremberg in 1583 and never before translated into English. Then came something lighter—the fragments of an autobiography by John Wilkes describing his chase across Europe after a famous Italian courtesan. Finally there was a sumptuous folio of sixteen coloured lithographs accompanying a new translation of the greatest pre-Chaucerian poem in the English language—"Sir Gawain and the Green Knight."

The programme for the present year is equally varied and elegant. The Press accepts only 200 outside subscribers, at an annual subscription of £5 5s. for three books. The prudent collector of fine books could not make a happier investment.